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WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Regional Meeting for Africa
Tunis, 2-6 November 1992

ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Prepared by the Secretary-General of
the World Conference on Human Rights

Item 1. Opening of the session

1. The Regional Meeting for Africa will be opened by the Secretary-General of the World Conference on Human Rights and by the head of the delegation of the host country. The session is scheduled to be held in Tunis from 2 to 6 November 1992. It may be recalled that the General Assembly, in paragraph 4 (d) of its resolution 46/116, decided that, in accordance with the objectives and provisions of its resolution 45/155, regional meetings should be convened for each region that so desired within the institutional framework or with the assistance of the regional commissions and that those meetings should be financed as part of the preparatory work for the World Conference, as recommended by the Commission on Human Rights in paragraph 8 of the annex to its resolution 1991/30. Subsequent to the adoption of this resolution, the Secretary-General of the Conference was notified of the desire of the African regional group to hold a regional preparatory meeting for the World Conference on Human Rights, in Tunis from 2 to 6 November 1992. Subsequently, the Government of Tunisia graciously offered to host this regional meeting.

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* Re-issued for technical reasons.

Item 2. Election of officers

2. It may be recalled that the Preparatory Committee, at its third session, agreed to adopt, for the regional meetings, the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. However, the question of the participation of non-governmental organizations at the regional meetings is based on decision PC.3/2 in which the Preparatory Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it request the Secretary-General to invite the following non-governmental organizations to the regional meetings for the World Conference on Human Rights:

(a) Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council which are active in the field of human rights and/or development as well as in the concerned region;

(b) Other non-governmental organizations which are active in the field of human rights and/or development, and have their headquarters in the concerned region, in prior consultations with the countries of the region which designate representatives properly accredited by them to participate as observers in the regional meeting.

3. In accordance with these rules, as adopted to the particular requirements of the regional meeting, the session is called upon to elect a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur, with due regard to equitable geographical distribution.

Item 3. Appointment of the Credentials Committee

4. A Credentials Committee shall be appointed at the beginning of the session. It shall consist of five members, who shall be appointed by the Plenary, on the recommendation of the General Committee. The Credentials Committee shall elect its own officers. It shall examine the credentials of representatives and report to the Plenary.

Item 4. Adoption of the agenda and of the rules of procedure

5. The provisional agenda, drawn up by the Secretary-General of the Conference, is based on the recommendations of the African Group and is contained in document A/CONF.157/AFRM/1/Rev.2.

6. At its third session, the Preparatory Committee agreed to adopt, for the regional meetings, the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, as adapted. In accordance with these rules, the Regional Meeting is called upon to formally adopt the rules of procedure as adapted.

Item 5. Organization of work

7. A provisional programme of work will be drawn up by the General Committee in accordance with established practice at United Nations meetings.

8. In view of the limited time available, the Meeting may wish to establish time-limits on the length of statements. The Meeting may also wish to encourage joint statements, to the extent possible, as well as statements addressed to more than one item on the agenda.

9. The Meeting may wish to consider the need to set up a Main Committee, to examine specific agenda items; such a Committee, if established, may meet simultaneously, along with the Plenary.

Item 6. Consideration of issues relating to the protection and promotion of human rights, including the implementation of international and regional human rights instruments

(a) Responsibility of individuals, groups, institutions and non-governmental organizations for the protection and promotion of human rights;

(b) Role of Governments in the strengthening of the promotion and protection of human rights;

(c) Role of competent national institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights at the national and regional levels.

10. The thematic parameters for this agenda item include the consideration of questions relating to the protection and promotion of human rights from a regional perspective, the question of ratification/accession of international and regional human rights instruments, as well as the role of governments in strengthening of the promotion and protection of human rights. The responsibility, inter alia, of non-governmental organizations for the protection and promotion of human rights as well as the role of competent national institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights at the national and regional levels would also be examined.

11. The attention of the meeting is drawn to the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Regional human rights instruments and institutions" (A/CONF.157/AFRM/2).

12. Attention is also drawn to the report of the Secretary-General prepared at the request of the African Group entitled "Ratification of or accession to the various human rights instruments" (A/CONF.157/AFRM/3).

13. In addition, the meeting will have before it the following documents:

Updated report of the Secretary-General on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (E/CN.4/1991/23 and Add.1);

Report of the International Workshop on National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Paris 7-9 October 1991 (E/CN.4/1992/43 and Add.1);

Report of the working group on drafting a declaration on the right and responsibility of individuals, groups and organs of society to promote and protect universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms (E/CN.4/1992/53 and Corr.1).

The relevant Fact Sheets and publications of the Centre for Human Rights will also be available.

Item 7. Consideration of issues relating to the objectives of the World Conference of particular importance to the region: a regional perspective

(a) Elimination of apartheid and of the new forms of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and religious extremism;

(b) Obligation of States to cooperate and display solidarity in the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights and, in particular, in the realization of the right to development;

(c) Relationship between human rights and humanitarian situations and evaluation of the effectiveness of emergency responses, strategies and existing machinery for providing prompt, appropriate and adequate assistance for refugees and displaced persons in Africa.

14. An important element of this agenda item, of particular importance to the region, is the elimination of apartheid and of the new forms of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and religious extremism. In this connection, the attention of the Meeting is drawn to the following documents:

Interim report of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Southern Africa, prepared in accordance with Commission resolutions 1991/8 and 1991/21 and Economic and Social Council decision 1991/237 (E/CN.4/1992/8);

Report of the Secretary-General on measures to combat racism and racial discrimination and the role of the Sub-Commission (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/11);

Updated report prepared by Mr. Ahmad M. Khalifa, Special Rapporteur, on the adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights of political military, economic and other forms of assistance given to the racist and colonialist regime of South Africa (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/12);

Fact sheet No. 5: Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Global Consultation on Racism and Racial Discrimination (Geneva, 3-6 October 1988);

Fact sheet No. 12: Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination;

Fact sheet No. 14: Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

15. The obligation of States to cooperate and display solidarity in the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights, and, in particular, in the realization of the right to development is another essential aspect of this item. It is intended to focus on the issue of poverty and economic

underdevelopment and its relationship to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this connection, the attention of the Meeting is drawn to the following documents:

Report on the Global Consultation on the Right to Development as a Human Right prepared by the Secretary-General in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1989/45 (E/CN.4/1990/9/Rev.1); also issued as a Centre for Human Rights publication under the title The Realization of the Right to Development (HR/PUB/91/2);

Comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the question of the realization of the right to development prepared in acordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1990/18 (E/CN.4/1991/12);

Final report prepared by Mr. Danilo Türk, Special Rapporteur, on the realization of economic, social and cultural rights (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/16);

The meeting's attention is also drawn to relevant Fact Sheets and issues of the Human Rights Newsletter published by the Centre for Human Rights.

16. The relationship between human rights and humanitarian situations and evaluation of the effectiveness of emergency responses will also be discussed under this agenda item. This is of particular importance to the region, keeping in mind the magnitude of the problem, of the 17 million refugees globally, the region is hosting approximately 5.6 million. In this context, the attention of the meeting is drawn to the following documents:

New international humanitarian order. A report of the Secretary-General (A/47/352);

Fact Sheet No. 13: International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

Bulletin of Human Rights 91/1: I. Human rights and humanitarian law. II. Human rights and refugee law.

The attention of the meeting is also drawn to two working papers prepared by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for the Third Panafrican Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies held in M'Babane (Swaziland) from 28 September to 4 October 1992:

"Vulnerabilities of Refugees and Displaced Persons" in Background Conference paper (Pan/4.1);

Refugees and Displaced Persons (Pan/6.1).

Item 8. Consideration of public information activities at the regional and national levels relating to the World Conference and its preparatory process

17. It may be recalled that in resolution 46/116 of 17 December 1991, the General Assembly decided that the Secretary-General should give the Conference and the preparatory process thereto the widest possible publicity.

18. In addition, the Preparatory Committee, at its second session, by decision PC.2/2 entitled "Public information activities" (A/CONF.157/PC/37, Annex II), urged the Secretary-General of the United Nations to ensure coverage of the regional meetings.

Item 9. Adoption of the report

19. At the conclusion of its session, the Regional Meeting for Africa will adopt a report to be submitted to the World Conference, through the Preparatory Committee at its fourth session, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/116.